

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 27-40 and 57-59 are presently active; Claims 1-26 having been previously canceled without prejudice, Claims 41-56 having been withdrawn by a Restriction Requirement, Claims 27-30, 36, 39, and 40 having been amended, and Claims 57-59 having been added by way of the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, it was noted that a copy of the certified copy of the priority document has not been received from the International Bureau. The specification was objected due to informalities. Claims 27-29 and 36 were objected to. Claims 27-40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite, but otherwise indicated as containing allowable subject matter.

Regarding receipt of the certified copy of the priority document, Applicants respectively submit that form PCT/1B/304 filed with this application indicates that a certified copy was forwarded from the International Bureau to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Further, Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the courtesy of Examiner Markham to confirm that the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office would be obtaining a certified copy from the International Bureau.

Next, Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter in Claims 27-40, and the courtesy of Examiner Markham to conduct an interview in this case on January 13, 2004. During the interview, the objections and the 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, rejection identified in the outstanding Office Action were discussed, and

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acceptable changes were agreed to as noted on the Interview Summary Sheet. No new matter has been added.¹

Given the understanding reached during the interview, submitted herewith are those changes discussed during the interview. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that, with no prior art rejections, independent Claim 27 and the claims dependent therefrom patentably define over the applied prior art.

Finally, attached herewith is an Information Disclosure Statement making of record those references listed in the PCT application. Acknowledgement of consideration of these references on the attached PTO-1449 form and return of the PTO-1449 form initialed are respectfully requested.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussions, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

Ronald A. Rudder

Gregory J. Maier
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 25,599
Ronald A. Rudder, PhD
Registration No. 45,618

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 08/03)
GJM:RAR:clh

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¹ The changes to the application addressing the objections and the 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, rejection are changes not introducing new matter as support for these changes are found in the PCT application listing the documents identified in the U.S. application and found in the PCT application describing the plasma and substrate being connected to "masse" (i.e., an electrical ground). Further, the new claims find support in the original claims (for Claims 57 and 58) and find support in the specification page 24, lines 15-20 (for Claim 59).